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PTO/SB/05 (11-00)

Approved for use through 10/31/2002 OMB 0651-0032

U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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UTILITY PATENT APPLICATION TRANSMITTAL

Attorney Docket No. 10201-US-CPA

First Inventor ARMBRUSTER, Brian

Title LOW COST SATELLITE CACHING SYSTEM

Express Mail Label No.

(Only for new nonprovisional applications under 37 CFR 1.53(b))

APPLICATION ELEMENTS

See MPEP chapter 600 concerning utility patent application contents.

1. ☒ Fee Transmittal Form (e.g., PTO/SB/17)
(Submit an original and a duplicate for fee processing)
2. ☐ Applicant claims small entity status.
See 37 CFR 1.27.
3. ☒ Specification [Total Pages 14]
(preferred arrangement set forth below)
 - Descriptive title of the invention
 - Cross Reference to Related Applications
 - Statement Regarding Fed sponsored R & D
 - Reference to sequence listing, a table, or a computer program listing appendix
 - Background of the Invention
 - Brief Summary of the Invention
 - Brief Description of the Drawings (if filed)
 - Detailed Description
 - Claim(s)
 - Abstract of the Disclosure
4. ☒ Drawing(s) (35 U.S.C. 113) [Total Sheets 2]
5. ☐ Oath or Declaration [Total Pages]
 - a. ☐ Newly executed (original or copy)
 - b. ☒ Copy from a prior application (37 CFR 1.63 (d))
(for continuation/divisional with Box 18 completed)
 - i. ☐ **DELETION OF INVENTOR(S)**
Signed statement attached deleting inventor(s)
named in the prior application, see 37 CFR 1.63(d)(2) and 1.33(b).
6. ☐ Application Data Sheet. See 37 CFR 1.76

ADDRESS TO:

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Box Patent Application
Washington, DC 20231

7. ☐ CD-ROM or CD-R in duplicate, large table or Computer Program (Appendix)
8. Nucleotide and/or Amino Acid Sequence Submission (if applicable, all necessary)
 - a. ☐ Computer Readable Form (CRF)
 - b. Specification Sequence Listing on:
 - i. ☐ CD-ROM or CD-R (2 copies); or
 - ii. ☐ paper
 - c. ☐ Statements verifying identity of above copies

ACCOMPANYING APPLICATION PARTS

9. ☐ Assignment Papers (cover sheet & document(s))
10. ☐ 37 CFR 3.73(b) Statement (when there is an assignee) ☐ Power of Attorney
11. ☐ English Translation Document (if applicable)
12. ☐ Information Disclosure Statement (IDS)/PTO-1449 ☐ Copies of IDS Citations
13. ☒ Preliminary Amendment
14. ☐ Return Receipt Postcard (MPEP 503)
(Should be specifically itemized)
15. ☐ Certified Copy of Priority Document(s)
(if foreign priority is claimed)
16. ☐ Request and Certification under 35 U.S.C. 122 (b)(2)(B)(i). Applicant must attach form PTO/SB/35 or its equivalent.
17. ☐ Other:

18. If a CONTINUING APPLICATION, check appropriate box, and supply the requisite information below and in a preliminary amendment, or in an Application Data Sheet under 37 CFR 1.76:

☒ Continuation ☐ Divisional ☐ Continuation-in-part (CIP)

of prior application No.: 08/881,113

Prior application information:

Examiner M. RINEHART

Group Art Unit: 2756

For CONTINUATION OR DIVISIONAL APPS only: The entire disclosure of the prior application, from which an oath or declaration is supplied under Box 5b, is considered a part of the disclosure of the accompanying continuation or divisional application and is hereby incorporated by reference. The incorporation can only be relied upon when a portion has been inadvertently omitted from the submitted application parts.

19. CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS

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or ☐ Correspondence address below

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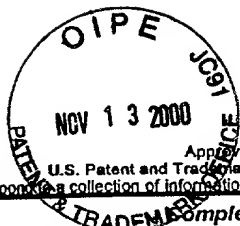
34,519

Signature

Date

11/09/00

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FEE TRANSMITTAL for FY 2001

Patent fees are subject to annual revision.

TOTAL AMOUNT OF PAYMENT (\$)**782.00**

TRADEMARK Complete if Known

Application Number	
Filing Date	
First Named Inventor	ARMBRUSTER, Brian
Examiner Name	
Group Art Unit	
Attorney Docket No.	10201-US-CPA



09/15/00

METHOD OF PAYMENT

1. ☒ The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge indicated fees and credit any overpayments to:

Deposit Account Number

13-1717

Deposit Account Name

MARKS & CLERK

- ☒ Charge Any Additional Fee Required Under 37 CFR 1.16 and 1.17

- ☐ Applicant claims small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27

2. ☒ Payment Enclosed:

- ☒ Check ☐ Credit card ☐ Money Order ☐ Other

FEE CALCULATION

1. BASIC FILING FEE

Large Entity Small Entity

Fee Fee Fee Fee Fee Description

Code (\$) Code (\$) Code (\$) Code (\$) Code (\$)

101 710 201 355 Utility filing fee

106 320 206 160 Design filing fee

107 490 207 245 Plant filing fee

108 710 208 355 Reissue filing fee

114 150 214 75 Provisional filing fee

Fee Paid

710

SUBTOTAL (1) (\$) 710

2. EXTRA CLAIM FEES

Total Claims 24 -20** = 4 X Fee from below 18 = 72

Independent Claims -3** = X =

Multiple Dependent Claims X =

Large Entity Small Entity

Fee Fee Fee Fee Fee Description

Code (\$) Code (\$) Code (\$) Code (\$) Code (\$)

103 18 203 9 Claims in excess of 20

102 80 202 40 Independent claims in excess of 3

104 270 204 135 Multiple dependent claim, if not paid

109 80 209 40 ** Reissue independent claims over original patent

110 18 210 9 ** Reissue claims in excess of 20 and over original patent

SUBTOTAL (2) (\$) 72

*or number previously paid, if greater; For Reissues, see above

FEE CALCULATION (continued)

3. ADDITIONAL FEES

Large Entity Small Entity

Fee Fee Fee Fee Fee Description

Code (\$) Code (\$) Code (\$) Code (\$) Code (\$)

105 130 205 65 Surcharge - late filing fee or oath

127 50 227 25 Surcharge - late provisional filing fee or cover sheet

139 130 139 130 Non-English specification

147 2,520 147 2,520 For filing a request for ex parte reexamination

112 920* 112 920* Requesting publication of SIR prior to Examiner action

113 1,840* 113 1,840* Requesting publication of SIR after Examiner action

115 110 215 55 Extension for reply within first month

116 390 216 195 Extension for reply within second month

117 890 217 445 Extension for reply within third month

118 1,390 218 695 Extension for reply within fourth month

128 1,890 228 945 Extension for reply within fifth month

119 310 219 155 Notice of Appeal

120 310 220 155 Filing a brief in support of an appeal

121 270 221 135 Request for oral hearing

138 1,510 138 1,510 Petition to institute a public use proceeding

140 110 240 55 Petition to revive - unavoidable

141 1,240 241 620 Petition to revive - unintentional

142 1,240 242 620 Utility issue fee (or reissue)

143 440 243 220 Design issue fee

144 600 244 300 Plant issue fee

122 130 122 130 Petitions to the Commissioner

123 50 123 50 Petitions related to provisional applications

126 240 126 240 Submission of Information Disclosure Stmt

581 40 581 40 Recording each patent assignment per property (times number of properties)

146 710 246 355 Filing a submission after final rejection (37 CFR § 1.129(a))

149 710 249 355 For each additional invention to be examined (37 CFR § 1.129(b))

179 710 279 355 Request for Continued Examination (RCE)

169 900 169 900 Request for expedited examination of a design application

Other fee (specify) _____

Reduced by Basic Filing Fee Paid

SUBTOTAL (3) (\$)

SUBMITTED BY

Name (Print/Type)	Richard J. MITCHELL	Registration No. (Attorney/Agent)	34,519	Telephone	613-236-9561
Signature		Date	11/09/00		

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11/13/00
jc772 U.S. PTO



BOX CPA

Agent's Docket No. 10201-US-CPA

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of)

ARMBRUSTER, Brian et al)

Serial No: 08/881,113)

Art Unit: 2756

Filed: 240-June-1997)

Ex: RINEHART, M.

For: **LOW COST SATELLITE CACHING SYSTEM**

November 09, 2000

Commissioner of Patent and Trademarks

Washington, D.C. 20231

TRANSMITTAL LETTER

Sir:

Please find enclosed for filing:

- Fee Transmittal Form (in duplicate)
- Utility Patent Application Transmittal Form
- Specification and drawings (16 pages)
- Declaration
- Preliminary Amendment
- Formal Drawings with Letter to Official Draftsman (Figures 1 to 3)
- Checks in the amount of \$710.00 and \$72.00

Respectfully submitted,

BY: 

Richard J. Mitchell

Reg. No. 34,519

Agent of Record

MARKS & CLERK, P. O. Box 957, Station B
Ottawa, Ontario Canada K1P 5S7 (613) 236-9561

jc511 U.S. PTO
09/757401
11/13/00

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of)
)
Armbruster, Brian et al.) Art Unit:
)
Serial No:) Examiner:
)
Filed:)
)

Agent's Docket no. **10201**

November 8, 2000

For: **LOW COST SATELLITE CACHING SYSTEM**

Honorable Commissioner of Patent and Trademarks

Washington, D.C. 20231

**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT TO NEW CONTINUATION
APPLICATION OF SERIAL NO. 08/881,113 FILED JUNE 24, 1997,
ART UNIT 2756**

Sir:

Please amend the attached application by way of preliminary as follows:

In the Drawings

Permission is respectfully requested to replace the informal drawings attached to the specification by the formal drawings submitted herewith in the accompanying letter to the Official Draftsman.

In the Specification

On page 1, above the heading "Field of invention", please add the heading --CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS --

On page 1, below the above newly added heading, please insert a new paragraph as follows: -- This application is a continuation of our co-pending application serial number 08/881,113 filed on June 24, 1997. --

In the Claims

Please cancel claims 1 through 24 without prejudice or disclaimer and add new claims 25 through 42 as follows:

25(Added). A method of disseminating information over a wide area network, comprising the steps of:

a) providing a central caching unit having at least one network address associated therewith and operative to receive data over said network from servers storing data providing information content;

b) storing received cacheable data from said servers at said central caching unit;

c) broadcasting cacheable data from said central caching unit over a satellite broadcast system directly to distributed local caching units associated with local access nodes giving remote users access to said wide area network for the retrieval of data from said servers;

d) selectively storing said broadcast data at said local access nodes in said local caching units; and

e) receiving requests from users at said local access nodes for data stored in said associated local caching unit, and if said data is stored in the associated local caching unit providing said data to the requesting user, otherwise re-routing said requests to retrieve said data over said wide area network.

26(Added). A method as claimed in claim 25, wherein a program running at said local access nodes selects what incoming broadcast data to save and discard.

27(Added). A method as claimed in claim 25 wherein said wide area network is the Internet.

28(Added). A method of disseminating data over a wide area network, comprising:

providing a central caching unit operative to store cachable data;

transferring data over said wide area network to said central caching unit from servers distributed over said wide area network and storing said data in said central caching unit;

selectively broadcasting stored data from said central caching unit over a satellite broadcast system directly to distributed local caching units associated with local access nodes giving remote users access to said wide area network in accordance with a scheme determined by a control program at said central caching unit;

providing a control program at said local access nodes to determine which of said broadcast data is stored in said local caching units;

providing access to said associated local caching units for users connected to said local access nodes to avoid retrieving said data from said servers over said wide area network when requested data is resident in said associated local caching unit.

29(Added). A method as claimed in claim 28, wherein requests for data from said local caching units are re-routed over said wide area network when said requested data is not resident in said associated local caching unit.

30(Added). A method of disseminating data over a wide area network, comprising:

providing a central caching unit operative to store cachable data;

transferring data over said wide area network to said central caching unit from servers distributed over said wide area network and storing said data in said central caching unit;

selectively broadcasting stored data from said central caching unit over a satellite broadcast system directly to distributed local caching units associated with local access nodes giving remote users access to said wide area network on the basis of interest in said data attributed to specific communities;

receiving said broadcast data at said local access nodes and storing said received data in said associated local caching units; and

providing access to said associated local caching units for users connected to said local access nodes to avoid retrieving said data from said servers over said wide area network when requested data is resident in said associated local caching unit.

31(Added). A method as claimed in claim 30, wherein said selective broadcasting of said stored data is controlled by a daemon at said central caching unit.

32(Added). A method as claimed in claim 31, wherein a program running at said local access nodes determines whether to save or discard received broadcast data .

33(Added). A method as claimed in claim 32, wherein said wide area network is the Internet.

34(Added). An information dissemination system, comprising:

- a plurality of distributed access nodes connected to a wide area network and having local caching units associated therewith,

- a central caching unit for caching data for dissemination to users connected to a wide area network; said caching unit receiving said data over said wide area network;

- a control unit at said central caching unit for controlling the broadcast of said cached data over a satellite broadcast system directly to said local caching units; and

- said local caching units receiving requests from users for cached data and supplying said data if resident on said local cache, and otherwise redirecting said requests over said wide area network.

35(Added). A system as claimed in claim 34, wherein said local access nodes include a computer running a program to select what incoming broadcast data to save and discard.

36(Added). A system as claimed in claim 34, wherein said wide area network is the Internet.

37(Added). An information dissemination system, comprising:

- servers distributed over a wide area network and operative to store data for dissemination;

- a central caching unit operative to store cachable data;

- a software utility for transferring data over a wide area network to said central caching unit from said servers;

- a plurality of distributed local access nodes giving remote users access to said wide area network, said local access nodes being associated with local caching units;

- a satellite broadcast system for selectively broadcasting stored data from said central caching unit directly to said distributed local caching units in accordance with a

scheme determined by a control program at said central caching unit; and

a computer at said local access nodes for running a control program to determine which of said broadcast data is stored in said local caching units;

whereby said users can retrieve requested data directly from said local caching units when said requested data is resident therein without establishing a connection with said servers over said wide area network.

38(Added). A system as claimed in claim 37, wherein said local access nodes include a router for re-routing requests for data from said local caching units are over said wide area network when said requested data is not resident in said associated local caching unit.

39(Added). An information dissemination system, comprising:

servers distributed over a wide area network and operative to store data for dissemination;

a central caching unit operative to store cachable data;

a software utility for transferring data over a wide area network to said central caching unit from said servers;

a plurality of distributed local access nodes giving remote users access to said wide area network, said local access nodes being associated with local caching units;

a satellite broadcast system for selectively broadcasting stored data from said central caching unit directly to said distributed local caching units on the basis of interest in said data attributed to specific communities; and

transferring data over said wide area network to said central caching unit from servers distributed over said wide area network and storing said data in said central caching unit;

receivers for receiving said broadcast data at said local access nodes;

whereby said users can retrieve requested data directly from said local caching units when said requested data is resident therein without establishing a connection with said servers over said wide area network and storing said received data in said associated local caching units.

40(Added). A system as claimed in claim 39, further comprising a daemon at said central caching unit controlling said selective broadcasting of said stored data.

41(Added). A system as claimed in claim 40, further comprising a computer at said local access nodes for running a program determining whether to save or discard received broadcast data.

42(Added). A system as claimed in claim 39, wherein said wide area network is the Internet.

Remarks

The applicants have amended the claims to define further aspects of the invention described in the disclosure for which it is desired to seek protection in this continuation application.

The Director is authorized to debit our deposit account no 13-1717 in the amount of $3 \times 80 = \$240.00$ (or such other amount as may be required) in respect of the independent claims over 3.

It is believed that this application is in condition for allowance such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted

Marks & Clerk
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BY: 

Richard J. Mitchell
Reg. No. 34519

A LOW COST SATELLITE CACHING SYSTEM

Field of Invention

This invention relates generally to the distribution of large amounts of data over a network, such as the Internet, and more particularly to a satellite based Internet caching system.

In recent years the Internet has become widely used as a means of disseminating information to a large number of people. Users, who may have access to the Internet via an Internet Service Provider (ISP) can access web pages residing on servers that may be located anywhere around the globe. As usage increases, so do the demands on bandwidth, leading to congestion in the network, which results in frustrating delays for the users.

One solution to the problem of ever increasing bandwidth requirements is to bring web content to locations close to users by means of a cache.

All caching systems attempt to move content closer to the client. Two principal types of caching systems, demand and mirrored caching, are currently being deployed throughout the Internet.

In demand caching, clients request web material through a shared intermediary known as a proxy server, usually located at the Internet Service Provider (ISP). If the material is located on the proxy server, the proxy server returns the material to the client. If not, the proxy server retrieves the material from the remote server, returns it to the client and caches it for later access by other clients. The material cached at the proxy server can in turn be accessed by other subscribers so that there is no need for them to access it through the network.

Demand caching is passive to the content provider; users determine what is cached by their access patterns. Demand caching also involves a chain of caches: the client's cache, local to a client's browser, the proxy cache and sometimes intermediate network cache points. As the cache becomes full, stale material is removed on a least use basis or by use of time-to-live parameters.

Demand caching suffers from several problems. As the content provider is a passive participant in the scheme, it is often unaware that its material is being copied and stored - demand caching often violates copyright laws; as cached copies and originals are not synchronized, the copy returned to other users is sometimes not the content provider's most recent copy but the previously cached version; as well, demand caching hierarchies, along with making routing difficult and being complex to maintain and implement, make it difficult for content providers to control access to their sites, to get an accurate picture of how often their pages are being accessed or to provide custom support to local databases.

In mirrored caching the content provider has a more active role. The content provider manages, or selects an agent to manage, a distributed system of mirrored sites. The sites are placed strategically through the network and the content provider or his agent pro-actively maintains synchronization amongst these sites by distributing material over the Internet.

Though providing more control to the web page owner, mirrored caching has its problems. The mirroring of sites is complex to maintain; the system forces end users to explicitly choose one of the mirrored sites; and, lastly, the sites are often remote from an ISP's point of presence; hence clients can still suffer from network delays.

An object of the invention is to alleviate the afore-mentioned problems in the prior art.

According to the present invention there is provided a system for disseminating information over a wide area network, comprising a central caching unit for storing data to be made available over said wide area network; a plurality of local access nodes for permitting users to access said wide area network; distributed caching units associated with said local access nodes for storing cacheable material; a communications system for establishing satellite communications between said central caching unit and said local caching units for the transfer of cacheable material from said central caching unit to said local units; and routing means at said local access nodes for routing packets from users to a destination address, said routing means including local routing tables containing the

addresses of material cached at the associated local node and responding to routing requests for locally cached material by directing said requests to the local cache.

The communications systems is typically satellite-based, but could also be a terrestrial-based broadcast or multicast system.

The invention is particularly applicable to the Internet, but may also be applied to other wide area networks, such as Intranets.

The system in accordance with the invention allows Internet web content to be stored at the local Internet provider level. The system, referred to as Managed Distributed Caching (MDC), permits the use of differential referencing of web page content, software filters and acknowledged satellite or terrestrial multicast to provide a low cost, easy to manage and copyright transparent, push caching service for the Internet. More specifically, an aspect of the invention relates to a scheme of combining differential referencing and static routing of web page content that provides content providers with a seamless and controllable caching system.

This invention addresses the problems of control, synchrony, complexity and performance that plagued the prior art.

To give complete control to the content provider, system allows the content provider to split web content into cacheable and non-cacheable elements. The splitting is completely under the control of the content provider. The non cacheable elements are stored at the content provider's site or, for small content providers through a virtual hosting mechanism at a central site. The content provider can now control and monitor access to its site and where direct contact with the user is required, provide access to non cached databases (e.g., cgi) and other custom features. Cached items, on the other hand, are transferred to the central cache site.

To ensure that the cached copies are up-to-date and synchronized across a network, the cacheable items, stored at the central cache site, are distributed, by satellite or terrestrial multicast, to caches at the subscribing ISPs.

To ensure that routing between cached and uncached elements is as simple as possible and easy to maintain, proxyless routing, through the use of static routes, is typically used at the ISP router.

The invention also provides a method of disseminating information over a wide area network, comprising the steps of storing cacheable material to be made available over said wide area network at a central caching unit; broadcasting said cacheable material to distributed local caching units associated with local access nodes giving remote clients access to said wide area network, said cacheable material stored at said local caching units being given a distinctive identifier; and intercepting requests from clients at said local access nodes for material with a said distinctive identifier and first routing said requests to the local caching unit for retrieval of the material therefrom.

To ensure that the cached items can be retrieved as quickly as possible, the cache is desirably located at an ISP's point-of-presence.

The invention will now be described in more detail, by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:-

Figure 1 is a block diagram of a system for disseminating information over a wide area network in accordance with the invention;

Figure 2 is a diagram similar to Figure 1 showing information flow;

Figure 3 is a data flow diagram.

The system for disseminating information over a wide area network, typically the Internet, is illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. The system comprises a central cache complex or web hosting system 1 consisting of servers 2 and mass storage devices 3 located near a satellite up-link station 4, which provides a cache update channel 5 via a satellite transponder 6 to a receive only receiver 7. The update channel 5 uses commercially available transport software located at the web hosting site 1 and the ISP sites 8. The content is encrypted before transmission.

The receiver is connected to a subscribing ISP (Internet Service Provider) 8 connected to the Internet 9, which provides a return path to the central cache 1. The ISP includes a local caching complex 10, consisting of servers, and mass storage devices 11 for storing cacheable web pages as well as custom filtering software, a web site, and a set of authoring tools and utilities, to be used by content providers for altering and uploading their material.

The main function of the central cache or web hosting system 1 is to store cached pages and handle requests for cached pages that cannot be served by the ISP's local cache.

The ISP caching complex 10 is located near an ISP's point of presence. Its main function is to efficiently store and manage cached material. Software, to enable ISP providers, based on their resource availability or other considerations, to choose the content to be cached, is also commercially available.

A content provider 12, having servers 13 associated with mass storage devices 14a, 14b is connected to the Internet 9 and hence to the central cache complex 1. The storage devices 14a store cacheable material and the storage devices 14b uncacheable material. Cacheable material is generally material of a more permanent nature, rich in graphic content, whereas uncacheable material is generally more transient material, preferably comprising smaller files. Uncacheable material might include information which is continually changing such as stock market quotes, whereas cacheable material might include more static but frequently accessed content such as home pages.

The web site, authoring tools and utilities are used to assist content providers 12 in re-referencing their web pages into cached and uncached elements, uploading these cacheable pages for storage and broadcast, and for performing registration and membership functions.

The central caching complex 1 can be associated with one or a contiguous subset of IP addresses.

A content provider 12, wishing to cache his material with the central complex 1, first registers with the central complex 1 at its web site. Once registered, the content

provider will be given access to a set of tools and utilities to enable him to maintain his cached material. The Content Provider will be billed monthly for use based on a published tariff. E-cash and credit card mechanisms are the preferred payment methods. An automated system e-mail receipts and keeps the subscriber informed.

An ISP wishing to become a franchised member will need to contact the marketing group of the facility maintaining the central caching complex.

Once registered, the content provider must determine what files are to be cached. The tools provided will allow both global changes to URLs (e.g frequently accessed gif files) and a step-through URL by URL approach. Typically, large inline images, java applets, video and audio clips will be cached.

The URLs (Universal Resource Locators) associated with cacheable items will have the monicker mdc.net inserted after the http:// string. For example, a link having the URL <http://www.cp1.com/bigpicture.gif> will become <http://mdc.net/www.cp1.com/bigpicture.gif>.

The URL's of non cacheable material e.g., the home page frame, cgi files, e-commerce or personal forms as well as private key material are not changed.

As in present caching systems, there exists no mechanism to stop mischievous cachers from pointing to a cached item, such as a video clip, and there exists no mechanism for the content provider to be aware that the cached item has been accessed. Material requiring access control thus must be left uncached or be so encrypted that a private key, available only at the home site, is required for decryption.

As web content is often customized per customer on the go, the customization software will need to be aware of material previously cached. For this purpose, a library of cached items will be maintained for the user.

The content provider can upload the material to central complex 1 for broadcast by executing the upload function available at the central web site. The upload function will perform a simple FTP (File Transfer Protocol) of the files so designated by the content provider. These files will be stored at central complex 1 and a daemon associated with the

uplink 5, alerted that files have been sent, will broadcast them to the ISPs via the satellite transponder 6.

The content provider will be given several choices for ISP distribution. A map will be provided of subscriber ISPs. Based on a page's community of interest, the content provider might elect to distribute the material in selected regions. A web page, for example, advertising Caribbean holidays might be distributed only to North American urban centres.

At the web site of the central complex 1, a daemon 15 will monitor which files are being uploaded. The upload feature is enabled only for subscribers. MFTP, for example, (Multi-cast FTP from Starburst Corp.) can be used as the protocol for ensuring accurate and synchronized delivery to all the member ISPs. If all ISPs are not updated the process backs out and an alert is sent to a network manager at the central complex 1. The manager determines the cause and tries again. The network manager also keeps track of which subscribers have received what material.

Software is provided at the ISP site 8 to enable the ISP to save or discard incoming material. This is done after reception. If the material is an updated version, deletion if it will also delete the original cached item.

The content provider's web site 12 is partitioned and cached. If a client 16 connected to ISP provider 8 wishes to access this site three routing scenarios are possible.

- (1) requests for uncached material
- (2) requests for cached material that is present at the ISP and
- (3) requests for cached material that isn't present.

In normal operation a client 16 attached to ISP 8 wishing to access a content provider 12 types a URL on his or her web browser, such as <http://www.cp.com>. The router 17 receives the request from the client 16 and obtains the IP address from the Domain name server serving the ISP 8. Once the IP address has been obtained , a TCP connection is established from the client 16 to the content provider 12 over the Internet 9.

When using the system in accordance with the invention the client 16 will normally request access to an uncacheable page and be granted access to it at the content provider's site 12 in the conventional manner.

If the client 16 requests a link to a cached page, recognizable by its unique monicker, the router recognizes the request and routes its to the local cache 11 to retrieve the appropriate material and pass it to the client 11. To effect the redirection of flows to the local cache instead of the content provider's site, changes only need to be made to the ISP's router's tables using a static route. In this implementation, mdc.net is assigned two IP addresses, one for all its local caches, another for its central cache. In static routing, all addressing that is prefixed by the local cache IP address is routed to the local cache server.

In the example shown in Figure 3 mdc.net is assigned the address 166.24.56.254 and mdc2.net is assigned the address 166.24.64.254. 166.24.56.254 is assigned the static route - all packets are forwarded to Ethernet port 1/4 in the ISP 8 and subsequently to the local cache server.

The possible message flows and flow diagrams are depicted in Figures 1, 2 and 3.

Scenario 1

The client 16 requests a connection to <http://www.cp3.com/homepage.html>.

The client's browser via the DNS (Domain Name Server) 20 and, using UTP, resolves and returns the IP address of www.cp3.com. Once returned, a TCP connection is set up in the usual way through the Internet 9 and all IP packets are routed, by the ISP router 17, in a standard fashion to the client 16 from the content provider 12.

Scenario 2

By clicking on a link embedded in a previously delivered page, the client requests a connection to: <http://mdc.net/www.cp3.com/bigpicture.gif>.

The client's browser via the DNS 20 associated with the ISP 8 and, using UTP, resolves and returns the IP address of mdc.net, which corresponds to the IP address of the

central caching complex 1. Normally the browser would then set up a TCP connection, via the ISP's router to central cache site. However, the router 17 first looks at its static routing table and sees that all references to the IP address corresponding to mdc.net are to be short circuited to the local cache. A TCP connection between the client 16 and the local cache 10 is then set-up and www.cp3.com\bigpicture.gif returned from the mass storage devices 11 if present.

Scenario 3

The client requests a connection to: http:\\mdc.net\\www.cp3.com\\bigpicture.gif.

The browser via DNS 17 and, using UTP, resolves and returns the IP address of mdc.net. Normally the browser would then set up a TCP connection, via the ISP's router 17 to the central cache site 1. In case the router 17 first looks at its static routing table and sees that all references to the IP address of mdc.net are to be short circuited to the local cache 10. A TCP connection between the client and the local cache is then set-up but the file www.cp3.com\\bigpicture.gif is not found. The local cache then re-initiates the request by substituting, for the mdc.net address, the IP address for mdc2.net. The request is passed first to the router 17 then on to mdc2.net, the location of central cache 1. In the case of a hierarchy of caches, this can, in turn, be routed statically at the other routers, such as 20, to caches further up the chain or alternatively to the content provider's site itself. This latter scenario, routing to the content provider, is an option available to content providers who do not wish to store their material at the central cache 1 and can be realized through message forwarding at the central cache 1.

The system in accordance with the invention thus provides a web hosting service, enabling efficient storage of content provider selected cacheable and non cacheable web content, and software for changing existing web content. It also provides a reliable cache update system including a broadcast channel and uploading facility, an Internet acknowledgement channel, software to ensure reliable delivery, a satellite receiver; and an ISP system, comprising storage servers, filtering software to select cacheable material, the use of static routes to redirect requests, and software to effect these changes in the ISP routing tables in order to redirect requests to the ISP cache or to the web host.

Other aspects of the invention include differential referencing of the web content, and proxy-less caching at the subnet router, both important elements of a seamless and simple inter-working of the system.

The system provides local caching (actually local server replication) without the requirement for an “in-line” proxy server to process every packet as it leaves the subnet (a known bottleneck on performance for all page fetches, not just the ones going to the cache). The cache sites are directly on each local subnet, so there is no need to route all traffic through a proxy. Indeed, references to data on the mirror server work exactly like local references so there is no impact on the routing performance of packets heading for non-replicated servers - an important improvement over existing models.

The system also provides a scheme for transparent, simple global addressing. On networks comprised of semi-autonomous subnets, address resolution (whether it be DNS, IP routing, or ARP) is attempted locally before it is passed up to the next network. There are several ways to spoof the address resolution protocol (DNS or IP routing, or maybe even ARP) so that what is actually a global address, not on the subnet, appears to be assigned to a local server (our mirror server) that is on the subnet. Spoofing describes a situation in which one machine claims to be another in order to intercept packets. By restricting the IP address of the mirror server to a single legal globally resolvable IP address (e.g., ‘fast.net’ (or a contiguous subset like a class C address), spoofing easier to achieve, another important improvement. Secondly, for subnets without a mirror server, the fact that a globally resolvable address (DNS or IP) is used means that clients will still be able to resolve the address to an actual server. This scheme provides an elegant solution to the “not replicated locally” problem by allowing non-participating subnets to remain unchanged- a very important improvement over existing schemes.

We claim:

1. A system for disseminating information over a wide area network, comprising:
 - a) a central caching unit for storing data to be made available over said wide area network;
 - b) a plurality of local access nodes for permitting users to access said wide area network;
 - c) distributed caching units associated with said local access nodes for storing cacheable material;
 - d) a communications system for establishing communications between said central caching unit and said local caching units for the transfer of cacheable material from said central caching unit to said local units; and
 - d) routing means at said local access nodes for routing packets from users to a destination address, said routing means including local routing tables containing the addresses of material cached at the associated local node and responding to routing requests for cached material by first directing said requests to the local cache.
2. A system as claimed in claim 1, wherein said communications system is a multicast communications system.
3. A system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said multicast communications system is a satellite communications system.
4. A system as claimed in claim 2, wherein locally cached material has a distinctive identifier, and said local routing tables respond to a request for material with a said distinctive identifier by associating it with the network address of the locally cached material.
5. A system as claimed in claim 4, wherein said distinctive identifier is also associated with the address on said wide area network of said central caching unit, and in the event said material is not available in the local cache, said local cache is programmed to substitute the address on said wide area network of said central caching unit and set up a connection via said router with said central caching unit over the wide area network.
6. A system as claimed in claim 5, wherein said distributed caching units comprise servers and storage devices on a local subnet attached to said routing means.

7. A system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said local routing tables are static routing tables.
8. A system as claimed in claim 2 further comprising at least one content provider connected to said wide area network, a storage device at said content provider storing uncacheable material for access by a client over said wide area network.
9. A system as claimed in claim 8, further comprising means responsive to commands from said content provider to distinguish cacheable material from non-cacheable material.
10. A system as claimed in claim 9, further comprising means for uploading cacheable material over said wide area network from said content provider to said central caching unit where it can be made available to said clients either over said wide area network or from said distributed caching units associated with said local nodes.
11. A system as claimed in claim 10 further comprising filtering means at said distributed caching units to permit multicast material to be filtered in accordance with local requirements.
12. A system as claimed in claim 2, wherein said wide area network is the Internet.
13. A method of disseminating information over a wide area network, comprising the steps of:
- a) storing cacheable material to be made available over said wide area network at a central caching unit;
 - b) disseminating said cacheable material over a communications system to distributed local caching units associated with local access nodes giving remote clients access to said wide area network; said cacheable material stored at said local caching units being given a distinctive identifier; and
 - c) intercepting requests from clients at said local access nodes for material with a said distinctive identifier and first routing said requests to the local caching unit for retrieval of the material therefrom.
14. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein said material is disseminated using multicast techniques.

15. A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein said requests are then routed from the local access node to said central caching unit or the corresponding content provider via said wide area network in the event that requested material is not available in the local caching unit.
16. A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the addresses of said local caching units are stored in local routing tables in a router associated with a local access node.
17. A method as claimed in claim 16, wherein said local routing tables are static routing tables.
18. A method as claimed in claim 18, wherein said cacheable material is multicast via a satellite communications system establishing satellite communications between said central caching unit and said local caching units .
19. A method as claimed in claim 18, wherein cacheable material is uploaded to said central caching unit for multicasting to said distributed caching units via said wide area network.
20. A method as claimed in claim 19, wherein uncacheable material is stored at a content provider's site and made available to clients via the wide area network.
21. A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein material received at said distributed caching units is filtered in accordance with local requirements.
22. A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein said wide area network is the Internet and said distinctive identifier is a URL with a distinctive monicker embedded in the URL.
23. A method as claimed in claim 12, wherein said distinctive monicker is the domain name of said central caching unit.
24. A method as claimed in claim 20, wherein the content provider selects and identifies cacheable and uncacheble material.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system for disseminating information over a wide area network includes a central caching unit for storing data to be made available over the wide area network. Local access give users access to the wide area network. Distributed caching units associated with the local access nodes for store cacheable material. A satellite communications system establishes satellite communications between the central caching unit and the local caching units for the transfer of cacheable material from the central caching unit to the local units. A router at the local access nodes routes packets from users to a destination address. The router includes local routing tables containing the addresses of material cached at the associated local node and responds to routing requests for locally cached material by directing the requests to the local cache.

BOX CPA

Agent's Docket No. 10201-US-CPA

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of)
ARMBRUSTER, Brian et al)
Serial No: 08/881,113) Art Unit: 2756
Filed: 240-June-1997) Ex: RINEHART, M.

jc511 U.S. PTO
09/757401
11/13/00

For: **LOW COST SATELLITE CACHING SYSTEM**

November 09, 2000


Commissioner of Patent and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

LETTER TO THE OFFICIAL DRAFTSMAN

Sir:

The Official Draftsman is respectfully requested to substitute the
attached formal drawings for the informal drawings on file.

Respectfully submitted,

BY: 
Richard J. Mitchell
Reg. No. 34,519
Agent of Record

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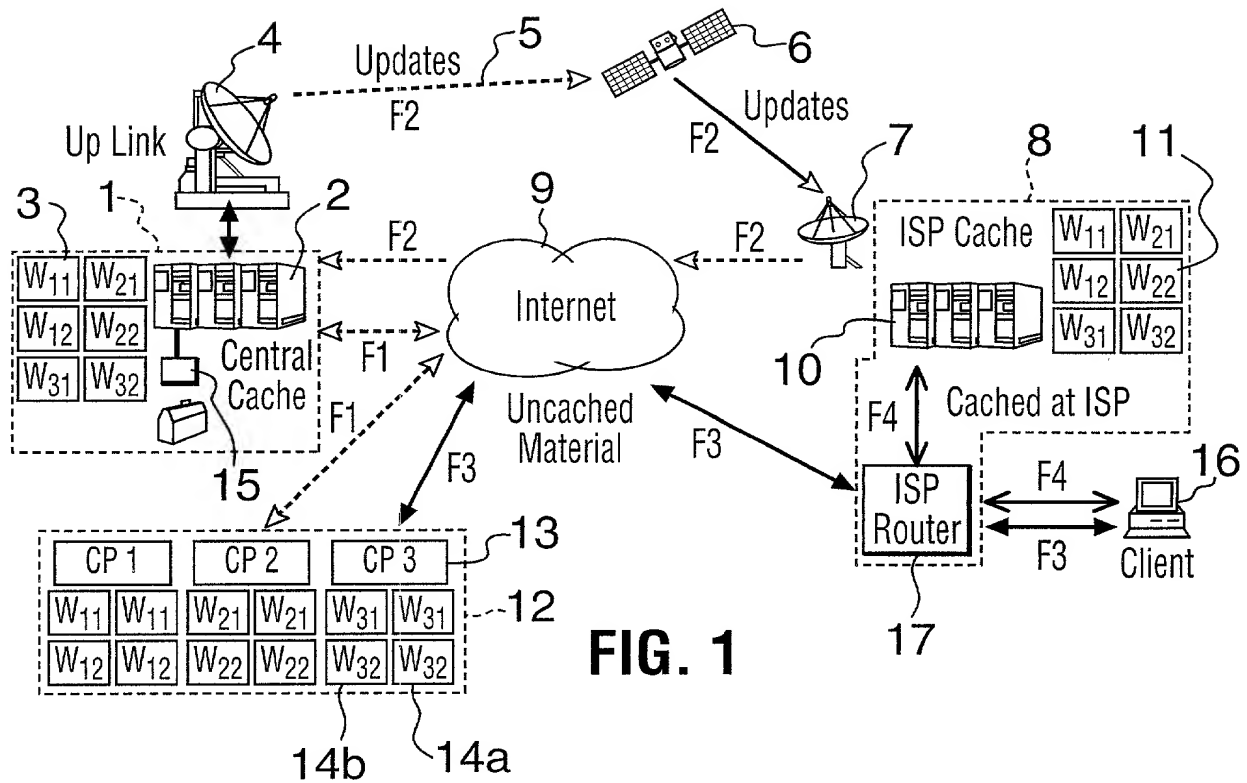


FIG. 1

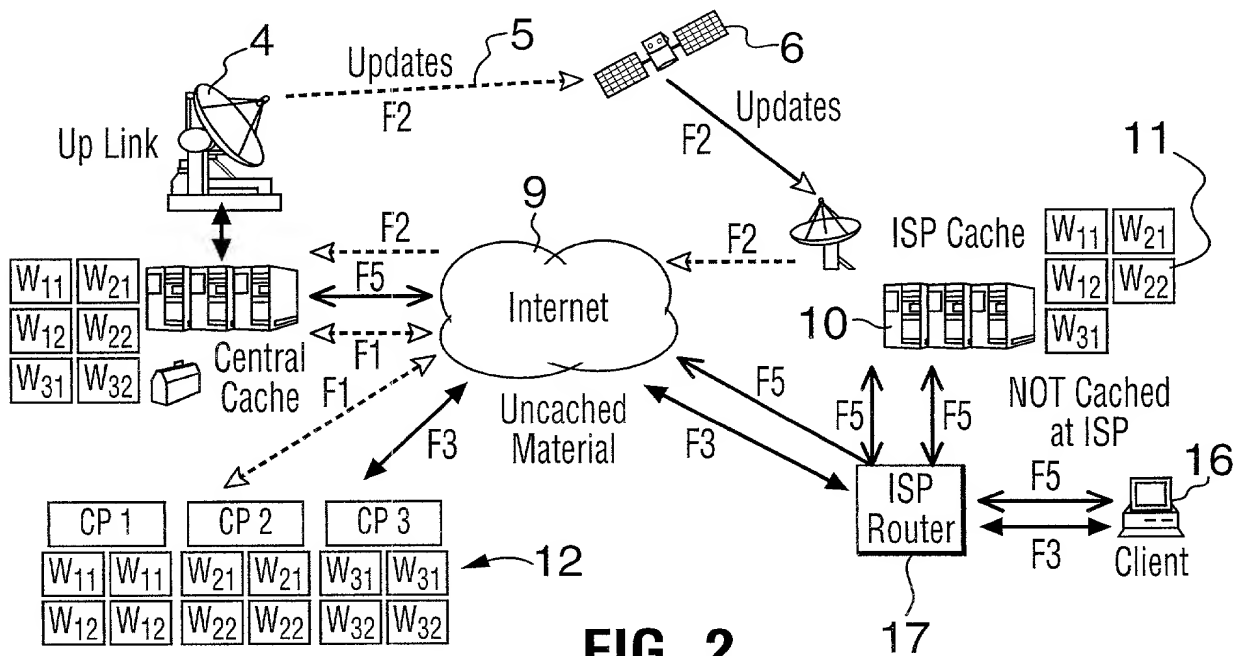


FIG. 2

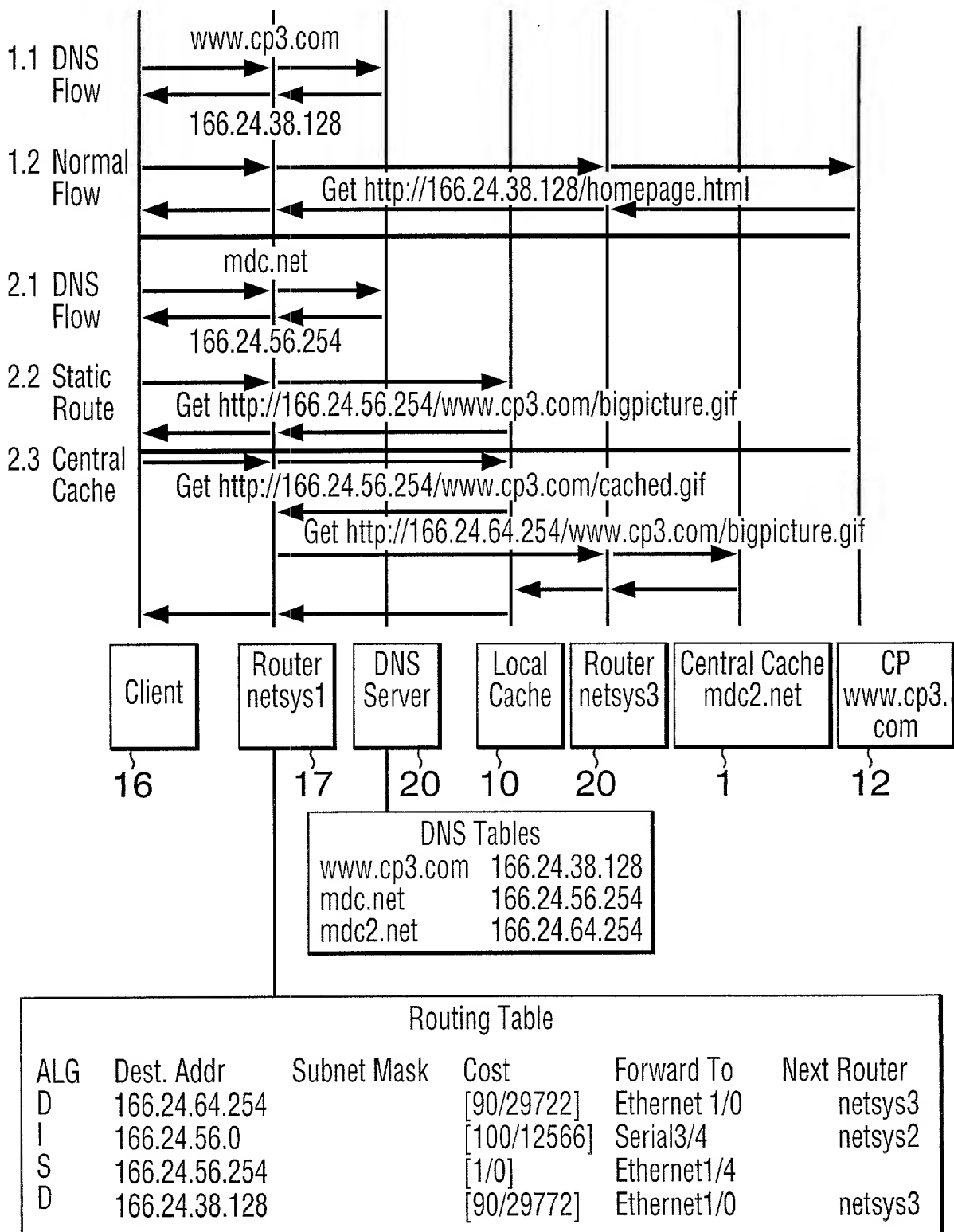


FIG. 3

DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION

As a below named inventors, we hereby declare that:

Our residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to our name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) for the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on an invention entitled

A LOW COST SATELLITE CACHING SYSTEM

the specification of which is described in United States Application No. 08/881,113, filed on June 24, 1997.

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose information which is material to the examination of this application in accordance with Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, ss1.56(a).

I hereby claim priority rights under Title 35, United States Code ss119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s):

Priority claimed

No

(Number) (Country) (Day/Month/Year)

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, ss120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, ss112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose material information as defined in title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, ss1.56(a) which occurred between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

(Application Number)

(Filing date)

(Status)

I hereby appoint the following agent to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith:

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George MacGregor, Reg. No. 37,547**

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I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

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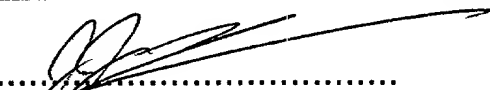
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